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work, and has made such a statement of it as no future adventurer will surpass. Mr. Taylor says that "we could have desired more ample pictures of the scenery through which he passed." We submit that Mr. Taylor in none of his travels has given more truthful pictures of scenery than those of this volume. The fancy of an imaginative writer sometimes "amplifies." Mr. Burton states facts and realities as he *saw* them, not as he imagined them.

Even where he treats of topics which other writers have treated, his superior observation and skill are manifest. No writer has described Cairo so faithfully. No writer has given such a daguerreotype of desert life. The chapter on the "Bedouins of El Hejaz" is a masterpiece of acute and original remark. The picture of the caravan on its march is a splendid piece of word-painting. The erudition of the notes, which draw us somewhat too frequently off from the text, is most curious and copious. And throughout the volume there is a tone of honesty and candor, and a spirit of scientific enthusiasm, which make us forget that it is a story of trickery and fraud.

We ought to add, that the American reprint is elegantly executed.

3.—*A Threelfold Test of Modern Spiritualism.* By WILLIAM R. GORDON, D.D. New York: C. Scribner. 1856. 12mo. pp. 408.

DR. GORDON'S book is earnest in its spirit, ingenious in its argument, and clear in its style. Its literary faults are those of too frequent repetition and the multiplication of needless details. It might be abridged one half, without injury to its logic, and much to the comfort of its readers. We go for the homœopathic practice in "spiritual" matters, and dread, above all things, large doses of "spiritual" bitters. Dr. Gordon has sinned in this regard, though his purpose is benevolent. He has treated us to more nonsense than an ordinary digestion can bear; and many, before they have finished his first test, will throw down the book in satiety of disgust.

Dr. Gordon's theory of the heterogeneous phenomena which are raked and piled together under the general name of "spiritualism," is that they are caused, barring a respectable share of imposture, by *real spirits*, genuine, disembodied, intelligent agents; and so far he agrees with Messrs. Hare, Edmonds, Tallmadge, and the host of minor apostles of the new gospel. But he takes deadly issue with these gentlemen in affirming those spirits to be *demons*, imps of Satan, inveterate liars, malignant fiends. He is not the first who has

broached this theory. It has been ably maintained by several Swedenborgian writers. But his book, we believe, is the first elaborate work which has taken this view. His reasons for adopting it appear to us insufficient. His conclusion (if conclusion that can be called which seems to have been reached before the facts were examined) is far too hasty, and no just heed is given to theories already promulgated. In this respect, the work of Dr. Mahan is to be much more highly commended. We cannot resist the impression that Dr. Gordon's Biblical prejudices suggested his theory, and that he is rather pleased to verify by modern facts the literal stories of demons and their work which are contained in the Jewish Scriptures. Having accepted this theory, Dr. Gordon, like a sound divine, proceeds to give the Devil his due, and to belabor him most unmercifully with all the weapons he can bring to bear. The three tests which he applies are, first, *his own experience*; second, the character of the communications; and third, the relation of these communications to the Bible. The results of the first test he gives us in an account of fifteen "sittings," with their questions mentally asked and the answers rapped out. These sittings must have been dismally tedious, and the sum total of their scientific and religious value bears a small proportion to their pecuniary outlay. The Yankee instinct, which craves always an equivalent for money spent, is sorely tried in spiritual inquiries, — not to mention the incidental annoyances of bad grammar and bad spelling. Dr. Gordon is entitled to honorable mention among patient men. He is fit to join an African voyage of discovery. An ordinary investigator would have broken down at the third sitting, and dismissed the whole thing as a humbug.

Dr. Gordon's second test, the nature of the communications, is very satisfactory as proving a negative. He shows beyond all question that it is morally impossible for good spirits, wise spirits, spirits having any claim to respectability, to utter the inane drivel which makes the staple of the most dignified communications. We have dipped extensively, in the few past years, into the records of these wonderful utterances, in the hope of finding something worth preserving; but the search has been like the search for Captain Kidd's treasure. Any single specimen is bad enough, but the mass is monstrous. The offence is rank and universal, — an offence against rhetoric, logic, syntax, and orthography, not less than against history, common sense, reverence, and decency. If it be heaven where these spirits dwell, such a heaven would be no better than a Bedlam of fools. We regret that we cannot say of Dr. Gordon's facts that they prove his affirmative, since it were very desirable to acquit all human and earthly agencies of any share in such

rigmarole. It is sadly true that the brains of men are adequate to its production, and that equal offences are perpetrated by the new school of poets, orators, and philosophers in their normal and uninspired condition. The devils have enough to bear without this heavy load. "*Nec dæmon intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus.*"

The third test, the Bible, is applied quite skilfully to show that the utterances of modern mediums differ from those of the sacred oracles as Satan differs from God, and that they are identical with those which Scripture condemns as emanating from the Devil. There is a leaven of Scripture language in the outpourings of the "spirits," but it is vilely used, and floats on a weak flood of tasteless metaphor. So far as they are critics, they are rationalists, and seek to weaken the authority of the Bible, to throw doubt upon the miracles of Jesus, and to invalidate his superhuman holiness. The cautions and appeals of Dr. Gordon to Christians are honest and timely. It is certain that no Christian will be assisted in his faith by this help, and there is danger that many may lose intelligent belief, bewildered by its pretentious rhapsodies. Spiritualism is rapidly peopling our insane hospitals, while it adds none to the number of active Christians.

Our own view of the causes of these phenomena was expressed at length in a former number of this journal. Additional facts have only confirmed that opinion, and we are persuaded that, if not the true view, it is at least an approximation to the true view,—in the direction of the truth. As a branch of science, spiritualism is more strange than profitable, and morally, it is worse than useless.

4.—*The Poetry of the East.* By WILLIAM ROUNSEVILLE ALGER.
Boston: Whittemore, Niles, and Hall. 16mo. pp. 288.

MR. ALGER has essayed in this volume a difficult task. To preserve the characteristics of Oriental verse, its luxuriant imagery, its epigrammatic humor, its dreamy languor, even in a direct version, is almost impossible. Much more is the attempt bold, when the version is indirect, a translation of a translation, and the writer has to learn through a Western tongue the spirit of Eastern thought and the flow of Eastern melody. It is higher success to succeed with such a disadvantage. We have not been able to compare the translations with their German originals, and so cannot vouch for their fidelity; but we are able to pronounce the volume, as a volume of English verse, to be very attractive and charming. It has the flavor of the East on all its